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MIRROR

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Few things have given us more satisfaction in recent years than the elevation of Ted Williams to Baseball's Hall of Fame by an overwhelming vote of the nation's veteran sports writers.

We got to know the Splendid Splinter rather well while he was getting acquainted with the business of flying jets, at Cherry Point, for his second overseas tour of duty.

Williams flew the slow jobs in World War II, and he was getting along in years when he came into the Marine Corps again for further action in Korea. Many have forgotten, but he narrowly escaped flaming death when his plane crashed and burned in that desolate little country.

Ted spent possibly the five best years of his baseball career in service. Most men would have been bitter about a second hitch that a lot of his serverest felt was less than fair.

However, on our fishing trips in coastal waters he never complained to us about this turn of events. He did say, philosophically, that the felt his playing days would be practically over by the time he returned from Korea.

Only a superb athlete who kept himself in top physical condition as a matter of daily routine could have come back, as Ted did, to pick up where he left off. It is quite probable that Williams is the greatest baseball player who ever walked on a diamond.

The former Red Sox slugger, who told us repeatedly that he liked New Bern, was the most considerate celebrity we have ever met. Who else would have consented, minutes after we first came face to face with him, to pick a personal All-Star team of players he had competed with and observed?

The story was one that any big city sports writer would have jumped at, and yet, Ted gave it to a tank towner on short acquaintance. The exclusive release went all over the world that night, carrying a New Bern dateline.

Who else in baseball voluntarily helped young players on opposing teams with their stance at the plate during batting practice? No wonder he is respected so much by countless athletes past and present who got valuable suggestions from a top star when no one else bothered to notice them.

You can learn a lot about a fellow when you fish with him, and what we learned about Ted was all good. Never once did he criticize other well known players or belittle their accomplishments. Nor did he boast about his own remarkable ability.

"I'm slow getting down to first base," he told us. "If I could run like those guys I

could add ten points to my batting average," Slow or not, he had a season average of .388 when he was 37 years old, and of course batted .406 his best year.

At Boston's Fenway Park he is remembered by club house attendants for the money he gave them out of his own pocket at the end of each season to show he appreciated their service to the team. No one will ever know how many other peo-

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PENSIVE MOOD—Three-year-old Cathy Miller can be quite serious at times, and in this photograph her smile is as inscrutable as Mona Lisa's. She is the daughter of Linda and Harold Miller, Jr., of Tacoma Park, Md. A native New Bernian, her father is assistant manager of a variety store in the Langley Park Shopping Center. Cathy, as you might guess, loves books, could count to ten at the age of one, and is

wise beyond her years. Needless to say, her grandparents, Mrs. Mildred Miller of New Bern and Harold Miller of Greenville are quite proud of the young lady. It would be rude indeed, if we attempted to delve into Cathy's secret thoughts, but wouldn't it be interesting to read her mind? Alas, a three year old's world is off limits for adults, so we'll never really know.